

"Returnable Spaces" – The Aciplatani Community's Project

The Aciplatani community presents its co-design activities for the redevelopment of urban spaces along Via Rosario Messina.

What Is a Community Map?

A community map is a tool that residents use to represent their living environment. It highlights how the local community perceives and values its territory and its memories. It can be the first step when we want to transform a place, allowing us to start imagining its future.

Educational Community's Participation

In October 2022, we shared our story in Tropea during the interregional seminar "School Regeneration," organized by the Regional School Offices (USR) of Calabria, Puglia, and Sicily, focusing on national guidelines and new scenarios. The project "Returnable Spaces" focuses on urban regeneration and was presented during this seminar.

WWF Prize Event

The students and teachers from the Danilo Dolci School of Via Rosario Messina, along with the Oratorio La Casa dei Ragazzi of Aciplatani, will be awarded a special recognition from the WWF for their outstanding example of active citizenship.

- **Where:** Danilo Dolci Primary School, Via Rosario Messina, AciPlatani
- **What:** Award Ceremony
- **How:** In person and with a live connection to the national WWF office
- **Why:** For their exemplary model of community engagement
- **When:** October 4th at 11 AM

Follow the event updates:

- [Website of I.C. Giovanni XXIII Acireale](#)
- [Facebook Page](#)
- [Instagram Page](#)

Community Meetings and Activities

- **July 2022:** Community discussions on "Returnable vs. Disposable Spaces" began with community mapping and stakeholder engagement.
- **September 2022:** Demolition of derelict structures started.
- **October–November 2022:** SWOT analysis conducted by youth groups to identify critical issues, strengths, threats, and opportunities for urban regeneration.
- **November 2022:** The community began recognizing and generating ideas for regenerating vacant areas.

Community Mapping in Aciplatani (January 2022)

The mapping involved the school, parish, and over 150 mapped points through three public events.

Key Findings:

- **Likes:** A small, peaceful town, strong sense of community, the parish, and the school as primary hubs.
- **Dislikes:** General lack of maintenance, few activities for children and youth, absence of green spaces, poor road conditions, and limited public transport. The town has lost its functions and urban appeal, and the earthquake left lasting scars.

Wishes for the Future

Residents expressed a desire for Aciplatani to return to its former vibrancy, with more public events, reopening of the Museum of Rural Art, and more spaces for children, youth, and sports.

Co-Design Process

After the community mapping, the next step was to initiate a regeneration process for the area adjacent to the school, a site of post-earthquake demolitions. This was identified as a space for community gatherings, outdoor education, and to prevent the area from falling into decay.

Four co-design meetings were held, and ideas for creating spaces for play, sports, and learning were proposed.